U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☑ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Peter Turnamian

Official School Name: Watchung School

School Mailing Address: 4 Garden Street
Montclair, NJ 07042-4198

County: Essex State School Code Number: 170

Telephone: (973) 509-4259 E-mail: pturnamian@montclair.k12.nj.us
Fax: (973) 509-1344 Web URL: www.montclair.k12.nj.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Frank Alvarez Ed.D. Superintendent e-mail: falvarez@montclair.k12.nj.us

District Name: Montclair School District District Phone: (974) 509-4000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Shelly Lombard

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 7 Elementary schools
   (per district designation) 3 Middle/Junior high schools
   1 High schools
   0 K-12 schools
   11 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 16321

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	35	41	76		7	0	0	0
1	46	32	78		8	0	0	0
2	39	38	77		9	0	0	0
3	37	40	77		10	0	0	0
4	47	29	76		11	0	0	0
5	41	29	70		12	0	0	0
					Total in Applying School:			454

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

1 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
9 %	Asian
24 %	Black or African American
8 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
58 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 2%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	3
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	4
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	7
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	454
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 0%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 0

Number of languages represented, not including English: 0

Specify languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 9%

   Total number of students who qualify: 41

   If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 14%

    Total number of students served: 65

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

5	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	19	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	18	Specific Learning Disability
1	Emotional Disturbance	19	Speech or Language Impairment
2	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
1	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	19	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	13	2
Paraprofessionals	14	5
Support staff	6	0
Total number	53	7

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 24:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	95%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

The teacher turnover rate is a approximate estimate of 3 teachers per year.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____%
Enrolled in a community college	_____%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____%
Found employment	_____%
Military service	_____%
Other	_____%
Total	**0**%

PART III - SUMMARY

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The landscape of public school reform has shifted dramatically in recent years with stakes for its success higher than ever before. During these challenging times, Watchung School, the Montclair Public Schools' Science and Technology elementary magnet, represents a model of excellence worthy of distinction, study and replication. This is evidenced by two distinct sets of data: five years of standardized assessments and research based surveys indicating high levels (greater than one standard deviation above the mean) of Academic Optimism (AO) among the staff.

Watchung School serves 460 Kindergarten through fifth grade students. Watchung offers an academically rigorous curriculum, integrating problem-based learning, to ensure our graduates are prepared for success in upper levels of schooling. Our curriculum is tightly aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS). Our school has a long tradition of excellence serving a highly diverse population of students. Over the past decade Watchung School has consistently led New Jersey elementary schools with high scores in all areas of the NJASK.

Over this same time period, Watchung School has expanded on its magnet theme of Science and Technology, facilitated by the construction of a state of the art media center and science lab. Our science curriculum offers hands-on activities including weekly lessons in a science lab and a greenhouse. Our technology lab is equipped with both personal computers and Macintosh desktop computers. Each day, students participate in producing and starring in a morning broadcast.

Our related arts program includes weekly offerings in music instruction incorporating Yamaha keyboards, Orff percussion, recorders, and a vocal recording studio. Students also enroll in a weekly art class which includes art history, appreciation and experiences that reference a wide range of mediums and expressions. The Health and Physical Education program includes use of gymnasium space for the delivery of instruction, and emphasizes nutrition and a healthy life-style.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is strong and parents are considered active partners in establishing and maintaining the overall educational environment. The PTA sponsors a variety of events during the school year and works closely with the Principal to ensure they align with curricular goals.

Annual events include: school-wide week long Science Fair, a Science Bee, 3 day environmental education camping trip, winter and spring concerts, field day, after school enrichment programs, science orientated field trips, and PTA sponsored family activities.

Vision Statement:
Watchung School students will graduate equipped with skills to be independent life-long learners. Students will demonstrate compassion for others and their environment through an understanding about the interdependence of all living things. Students will be critical thinkers, problem solvers and curious about how things work.

Our educational program is based upon our three Core Values:
1. Be a Problem Solver: We are curious. We are critical thinkers. We are risk takers.
2. Be Respectful: We are compassionate. We are listeners. We are accountable.
3. Be Independent: We are passionate about our interests/talents. We are developing the skills needed to obtain our goals. We strive to be lifelong learners.

These Core Values provide common vocabulary intended to empower all of our community stakeholders to be teachers who consistently expect greatness from all of our students.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The statewide assessment system of New Jersey is comprised of state tests that are designed to measure student progress in the attainment of the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), all states are required to assess student progress in language arts and math in grades 3-8 and grade 11. New Jersey also assesses student progress in science in 4th and 8th grade. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) categorizes students as Partially Proficient, Proficient or Advanced Proficient based on test results. The NJDOE categorizes a student Proficient if he/she achieves a scale score of 200 or above and categorizes a student Advanced Proficient if he/she achieves a scale score of 250 or above. The highest possible scores is 300.

The data presented in the New Jersey Report Card will differ slightly from the data in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reports required by federal law. The NCLB reports show assessment results in three grade spans after the application of NCLB rules for the purpose of calculating adequate yearly progress (AYP) and identifying schools in need of improvement. By contrast, the assessment results presented in the New Jersey Report Card have had no restrictions or conditions applied to them. These data are the state's assessment results that have been disaggregated into subgroups for all students who attend a school.

Watchung School's data can be found at the following URL:
http://education.state.nj.us/rc/rc10/rcoptions.php?c=13;d=3310;s=170;lt=W;st=E

Over the past five years students achieved between 93% - 100% proficiency or advanced proficiency in Mathematics. Over the same period, 86% - 99% of students achieved proficiency or advanced proficiency in Language Arts. The sub-group populations' sizes are less than 20 and therefore generalizations about trends cannot be determined. The data does demonstrate Watchung School consistently ranked among the highest performing elementary schools in New Jersey for a five year period.

Because sub-groups are small, achievement gaps are identified on the individual student level. Once identified, a deeper analysis of individual student achievement is conducted to determine specific content cluster(s) requiring further instruction and measurement. Specific instructional and curricular strategies are implemented and tracked. If a student doesn't show improvement, additional supports may be required. These supports may include but are not limited to: additional tutoring services, increased parental involvement, enhanced differentiation of instruction/curriculum, 504 or Child Study Team referral services.

Other than the stable five-year trend of high proficiency and advanced proficiency rates in Mathematics and Language Arts, the most significant trend in test data relates to Language Arts advanced proficiency. Since 2006, the percentage of students achieving advanced proficient in grade 3 – 5 has climbed from a range of 9% - 17% to a range of 22% - 33%. During this same time period, Watchung School teachers engaged in writing strategies that promote writing across the curriculum. Teachers also increased the degree of differentiation at the classroom level by implementing more balanced literacy strategies in all grade levels.

In the most recent year's data, 16 additional students scored a perfect 300 on the NJASK Mathematics test than the prior year. In Language Arts, 15 additional students scored a perfect 300. Watchung School's overall 85.5% proficiency and advanced proficiency rate in Language Arts exceeded the AYP target of 73%. Watchung School's 97% proficiency and advanced proficiency in Math exceeds the AYP target of 69%.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Watchung School uses data to drive decisions about instruction and curriculum. Teachers administer a variety of formative assessments on regular basis (6-7 weeks) in the areas of Language Arts and Mathematics. The assessments are administered with minimal interruption to the everyday classroom. The data generated by these assessments is analyzed within days of administration. The quick turnaround of this data is essential to the program's success, which is demonstrated in Watchung School's student achievement scores.

One example of how formative data drives instruction and curriculum at Watchung School is the use of running record assessments. Watchung School teachers administer these assessments to each student to determine each student's specific reading level. This data also provides teachers with detailed information about individual student's reading skill development. Teachers learn quickly students' areas of strength and weakness as readers. With this data, teaches are able to match students to appropriate fiction and non-fiction reading material. Teachers are also able to use this data to design specific curriculum activities to address areas of weakness identified by the formative assessment. Because these assessments are on-going, teachers are able to determine whether students are improving their reading skills or if further adjustments to instruction. are required.

In 3rd Grade, teachers administer a district-wide benchmark to all students twice during the school year. The benchmark measures student achievement in Mathematics and Language Arts. The summative assessment data generated from these benchmarks is used to inform real-time decisions about instruction and curriculum. Teachers are provided with additional time to analyze this data and create action plans based on the data. These action plans include adjustments for whole group, small group and individual students. Based on the data generated from these benchmarks, teachers are able to determine areas of proficiency and areas of need for each student, by strand, and cumulative progress indicator (cpi). Teachers are also able to complete line-item analysis of this benchmark data to determine specific misunderstandings students possess about specific standards. Once misunderstandings are identified, teachers are better able to determine how best to teach specific standards differently.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Watchung School seeks to communicate student performance in several ways. At the beginning of the school year, a presentation is created for parents and teachers. The presentation allows everyone to see NJASK scores from the previous year and provides an explanation about said scores. It is here parents are also made aware of our school's goals for the school year and are asked to join as partners in helping our students grow. Parents who are not present during this back-to-school-night presentation, as well as any community members, have full access to this data at any point in the year through our website: http://www.montclair.k12.nj.us/WebPageFiles/1549/watchungresults2010-BTSN.pdf

Assessment results are thoroughly explained during individual parent conferences, held at least three times a year. During that time, parents are familiarized with their child's formative and summative test results and are invited to see the child's work samples. In the early elementary grades, this is often presented through student portfolios. In the upper grades, students may participate in the conferences. Another way our community discusses student performance is through workshop offerings and parent meetings, which take place on a monthly basis. Watchung School offers a whole-day workshop entitled "Promoting Strategies and Tools for Academic Achievement," which allows parents to become familiar with assessment results and gain tools to aid their students in achieving academic success. Struggling learners may also participate in our STARS program. In addition to STAR services provided directly to children, suggestions are offered for parents to help their child's progress at home. More parent workshop offerings can be viewed through our website at: http://www.montclair.k12.nj.us/WebPage.aspx?Id=162 .

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Consistently considering ways to improve student achievement, the staff has reviewed the recent research of Prof. Wayne K Hoy. His study verifies a direct connection between increased levels of student achievement and high levels of Academic Optimism that is the belief that all students will achieve, in a school community. Watchung staff used this research to analyze their own work. The data obtained demonstrated that Watchung School is a model worthy of recognition. Prof. Hoy's researched-based construct of Academic Optimism was based on over 30 years of research in K-12 public schools. The Academic Optimism construct includes the following: faculty trust, academic emphasis and collective efficacy. Prof Hoy's research evidences a strong correlation between schools with high levels of academic optimism and student achievement when controlling for school level socio-economic factors.

These high levels of Academic Optimism provide evidence beyond standardized test data that Watchung School can offer other public elementary schools serving diverse populations with examples of all the three Academic Optimism components. Further research has identified proximal variables in schools that have an impact greater than distal variables further away from the school environment on students' achievement. Further study of Watchung School policies and practices relevant to specific research-based proximal variables may demonstrate strong correlations between specific policies and practices and the development of Academic Optimism at Watchung. This would provide schools with very specific research based policy and practice recommendations to consider for improving student achievement even when controlling for socioeconomic factors.

Presently, Watchung School works closely with other elementary schools within its district to collaborate about curriculum development, assessment data and technology integration. Watchung School Faculty visit other schools and host representatives from schools to share lessons learned.

The Blue Ribbon distinction will help Watchung School share lessons learned with a broader audience of schools through presentations at conferences and articles in professional publications.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum is increasingly centered around a Problem Based Learning format. Our community seeks to deliver instruction in a way that allows all students to explore the content and interact with their environment by building deeper connections among disciplines that carry through to real-life experiences. Watching students, equipped with an understanding of the interdependence of all living things, graduate with the skills to be lifelong learners, compassionate for others and caring for the environment.

The math curriculum centers around our "Problems of the day" (POD) approach. Teachers collaborate to choose problems that often have multiple answers and can be solved in a variety of ways, allowing for teachers to differentiate instruction. We emphasize the process of solving a problem rather than focusing on a final product. Throughout math lessons, students work collaboratively with peers, often using math manipulatives. Our approach to teaching mathematics helps meet our goals to develop critical thinkers, problem solvers, and students who are curious about how things work.

Our Science and Technology magnet theme drives our science and social studies curriculum. The overlying question guiding our work, "How are all living things interdependent?" incorporates hands on experiments and problem scenarios to address each content area. Students' work is showcased in events such as the annual science fair and Black History Month. Student projects are regularly included in the "Wake up Watchung" morning broadcasts.

In language arts, students actively participate in "book clubs" on every grade level. In addition to our balanced literacy curriculum, these clubs allow for our students to interact with engaging text in a real-life way with their peers, empowering them to enter into discussions that encourage the use of higher-order thinking skills as they evaluate and debate the books they are dissecting. Students monthly respond to their independent reading selections through the creation of poems, dioramas, skits, posters, songs, news articles, and so on. Writing projects are very interactive, as our students have mailed letters to famous people, written articles to submit to our town newspaper, and taught their classmates "how-to" do various projects through their creation of instruction guides.

Art critically relates to our magnet theme since artists and scientists are problem solvers, decision makers and independent, creative thinkers. Our students receive physical, tactile experiences in art that engage them in the creation of a multitude of media. The art program is project driven, incorporating lessons from art history, science, math and other disciplines.

In physical education/health/nutrition, children make deeper connections through team building and team work. The program is a hands-on and active program that develops gross motor skills and refines fine motor skills, with an emphasis on good sportsmanship. There is a concentration on developing the whole child; body, mind, and soul. Problem solving is included in all activities especially the manner in which a student can use his/her best attributes to better the team as a whole. Quick thinking during activities provides immediate problem solving opportunities.

Our curriculum is communicated to parents through monthly newsletters which keep parents abreast of class projects and happenings. Parents and community members can also find curriculum guides and maps housed in our school library for access at any time.

2. Reading/English:

Our standards-based reading curriculum is implemented through a balanced-literacy framework. This approach allows students to engage in several kinds of reading and writing instruction including whole group, small group, and independent opportunities for learning. Watchung School's balanced literacy program is closely aligned to the school's strategic plan and seeks to meet measurable goals each year by tracking the progress of individual student reading levels and the school as a whole. For writing, we incorporate the Teacher's College Writer's Workshop program, to enhance our implementation of balanced literacy. We use a workshop structure giving time for a teacher to model, have students engage in guided practice and small group work, and then have students practice through independent activities. A unique aspect is a Writer's Room in which a writing consultant trains parents to coach and conference with students in every class each week. These parent coaches offer one-on-one assistance in a workshop atmosphere.

Several opportunities are afforded for struggling readers to succeed. One program that specifically addresses struggling readers is Wilson Reading. This program is used in both a group setting and in individual intensive settings for students with more significant reading impairments. It is a carefully sequenced program based on the principles of the Orton Gillingham method. Students learn sound symbol relationships and syllabication rules that enable them to decode words for fluent reading and spelling. In addition to the Wilson program, we use age-appropriate materials, (novels and literature anthology) to teach comprehension strategies and to expose students to a variety of genres through a small group guided reading format. Teachers use running records to determine student grouping and progress, to better identify and address reading weaknesses on a continual basis. Watchung also has a reading specialist who comes into the building several days a week, who is Wilson trained, to provide small group instruction to students who are at risk in the first grade.

3. Mathematics:

Watchung School's math curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) with a strong emphasis on Strand 4.5: Mathematical Processes. This strand focuses on students' abilities to problem solve, make connections, develop reasoning, represent and communicate math concepts, and use technology as a tool in order to enhance mathematical understanding. Watchung School teachers believe in order to be successful in our ever-changing world, students must be able to effectively solve real world problems. Our goal is to teach all math concepts from basic number computation to advanced geometry by providing students with real-world examples to explore and ultimately find meaning within.

From Kindergarten to fifth grade, students are exposed daily to math journaling through "Problems of the Day" (POD). Teachers choose problems that often have multiple answers and can be solved in a variety of ways. Students in all grade levels are provided with a list of strategies that address different learning styles and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences such as, "Act It Out" (Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence) or "Draw It Out" (Spatial Intelligence). This allows students of various learning styles, and especially those that are struggling in math, to rely upon their strengths in any way they choose to tackle a problem. While we strive to provide lessons that address each individual learning style, we also work to stretch students out of their comfort zone and often ask them to "find another way" to solve a problem.

Teachers emphasize the process when solving a problem rather than focusing solely on the final product. This encourages students to be risk takers, a component of Watchung School's "Be a Problem Solver" Core Value. Throughout math lessons and especially during POD time, you can see students working with math manipulatives such as counters, fraction tiles, and pattern blocks as well as working collaboratively with peers and in order to gain deeper cognitive understanding. This is especially true for struggling students who benefit greatly from hands-on exploration and peer-to-peer collaboration. Over the years, we have watched all students become better able to tap into their own metacognitive awareness and use that understanding to construct knowledge.

While the curriculum and strategies described above address implementation in a mathematics classroom, they are designed to also enhance cross curricular disciplines and aligned with the overall vision at Watchung School of helping students become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and curious about how things work.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The Environmental Science program is an integral part of the school's culture. The program includes a full sized greenhouse that holds an extensive collection of plants, as well as plenty of room for experiments and growing seeds. Watchung School also has an outdoor nature courtyard, with a pond, areas for classes to gather, bird feeders and houses, and many areas for planting. The courtyard is a "Certified Schoolyard Habitat Site" by the National Wildlife Federation. All students graduate from Watchung School certified as "Junior Master Gardeners."

The main focus of the environmental program, is the concept of the interdependence of all living things. Students learn about nature and the world around them through hands on exploration and real life experiences. We use the nature courtyard and schoolyard as an extension of the classroom as much as possible. The students participate in "greening the grounds" one project at a time. The students have also been involved in all stages of creating a "Native Plant Garden", a "Butterfly Garden" and an "Herb Garden". We are currently planning a "Community Vegetable Garden".

The Environmental Science Curriculum is based on many well known environmental curriculum guides such as Project Wild, Project Learning Tree, Bridges to the Natural World (Audubon), Junior Master Gardening, and Project Aquatic Wild. Since we have a greenhouse, many of the lessons are centered around plants – life cycles, plant anatomy, seeds, plant classification, flowers and seeds, etc. The students use the greenhouse for many plant experiments including hydroponics.

Watchung School students can choose to join an "Eco Club" that meets every week. The students lead the school with many projects such as our monthly "Waste Free Lunch Day." The students also take care of the birds, compost, and special gardening projects. All Watchung School students are actively involved in keeping our school green!

5. Instructional Methods:

Teachers differentiate instruction in several ways, to insure the needs of all learners are met. Students are not tracked, so a diverse set of learners exists within each homeroom. Because curriculum is very project-oriented, classroom teachers offer students choices for the content, process, product through which they can meet objectives. These choices allow for students to express themselves through various intelligences and modalities, and add a richness to every student's class experience.

In order to support students who struggle, each grade has the support of classroom aides, who often work one-on-one or with small groups of students to offer remediation and review. Particularly in our reading and math classes, teachers and aides utilize flexible grouping and center activities to target specific needs of students. Our STARS program allows for in-class support to be provided for students who struggle academically. For students who are academically gifted, in-class support is also given through our SAIL (Students Accelerated in Learning) model. Much of our SAIL work is project-based and provides students, not with more work, but with new ways to challenge themselves to grow their critical thinking and problem solving skills. For all students, Watchung School seeks to ensure assessment is authentic and provides ongoing data measuring for the purpose of student growth. Teachers use assessment data in their planning, rather than teach lessons that are 'one size fits all'.

For students who have special needs, the special education program maintains high expectations for student achievement. In the lower grades, the special education program consists of a self-contained K-2 classroom and various pull-out opportunities. Students can receive services at our school for speech needs, reading and math deficits, occupational therapy, and counseling. As students grow, Watchung School aims to have as many students involved in full-day inclusion classes as possible where support is

offered through push-in opportunities. We seek to foster an appreciation for every student's diversity and work to build an accepting school community through daily team-building in all grades. During homeroom classes, teachers utilize morning meeting activities to grow a school culture valuing peer collaboration where all students feel connected to the community. These morning meetings allow time to address the diverse social needs of our students and promote their social and emotional growth.

6. Professional Development:

The professional development provided for the staff is rooted in the goal of helping teachers impact student achievement. Our professional development also aims to make our community a place where students attain 21st century learning skills and develop as critical thinkers and problem solvers. Our 'Learning and Professional Development Committee' allows for teacher representatives and school leaders to have input into forming professional development experiences. All opportunities are aligned to Watchung School's strategic plan, which outlines measurable goals our community has set to help us live out our vision and mission. Some of the recent learning opportunities provided for staff included training for interactive whiteboards, the Writer's Workshop program, and problem-based learning.

During bi-monthly staff meetings, which are held in a different teacher's classrooms, teachers begin by seeing and hearing from the 'host teacher' about the rationale for their learning environment, which has worked to foster more staff collegiality and collaboration. The majority of staff meeting time is then devoted to professional development, where guest speakers and teacher-leaders share learning on relevant topics.

In light of Watchung School's magnet theme, the community seeks to become more science and technology focused. Watchung School has partnered with Montclair State University (MSU) to provide staff training in problem-based learning for all teachers. MSU faculty have visited several times during the 2010-2011 school year in order to train staff to use their resources to develop problem-based learning activities, including projects in every grade showcased during Watchung Schools Science Fair. In technology, staff also received training to use Epson BrightLink projectors in all classrooms. This training prompted one of our teachers to step up to create and lead "Whiteboard Wednesdays", an after-school club where more than three quarters of our staff meet weekly to share best-practices regarding interactive whiteboards.

In Writer's Workshop training, teachers formed "study groups". Through these groups, lessons are planned in a collaborative environment, allowing for a more consistent and timely implementation of the writing program throughout the school. Teachers visited model classrooms that have been using the curriculum for some time.

7. School Leadership:

The Principal of Watchung School is first and foremost an instructional leader. The Principal implements the principles of distributive leadership and data-driven instruction to inspire the continual development of a professional learning community focused on student outcomes.

All Watchung School teachers are encouraged to participate in at least one of several standing committees that create, propose, implement and monitor ongoing improvement strategies in the areas of: high quality instruction, school culture, magnet theme, student achievement and family outreach. The principal supervises the agenda for these monthly committee meetings. This ongoing collaboration is also monitored by two larger committees. Staff committee work is guided by a leadership team, which includes at least one representative from all staff stakeholders. A School Action Team committee convenes stakeholders monthly that includes faculty members as well as parents and community leaders. Together, these two committees review a monthly scorecard of Watchung School's two-year strategic plan originated by the Principal. These monthly scorecards provide the committee with real-time data about progress toward specific objectives embedded within Watchung School's strategic plan.

The Principal also conducts regular informal observations of all classrooms to ensure alignment with

school-wide instructional goals. The Principal creates a schedule to allow for grade level meetings to occur weekly. These weekly meetings are essential for teachers to continuously monitor and assure curriculum alignment between classrooms. Furthermore, these weekly meetings provide teachers with opportunities to strategize, as a team the best way to meet the ever-changing student needs. By creating a schedule that values teacher collaboration and monitoring its effectiveness's, the Principal provides teachers with a key resource required for success: time.

Another key resource for success is communication. To promote high levels of communication, the Principal maintains an “open-door” policy for all faculty members and students. This “open-door” policy helps to ensure the entire Watchung School community can have a “voice” in their community. Whether a student has a conflict with a peer, or a teacher has a curriculum concern or a parent has a concern about a teacher, quick and easy access to the Principal helps increase levels of trust in the school community. The Principal of Watchung School believes it is important for community stakeholders to trust each other’s intentions. Therefore the Principal aims to implement a management style that will increase measurable levels of trust in the school community.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: NJASK

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publisher: New Jersey Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	97	92	100	98	97
% Advanced	75	74	73	64	65
Number of students tested	75	74	73	53	72
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	78	84	100	91	100
% Advanced	58	32	54	9	36
Number of students tested	12	19	11	11	14
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	91		100	92	80
% Advanced	27		77	42	60
Number of students tested	11		13	12	10
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	100	98	100	100	98
% Advanced	72	62	74	75	75
Number of students tested	51	42	51	32	44
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: NJASK

Edition/Publication Year: NJASK 2006-2010 Publisher: New Jersey Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	86	89	99	93	97
% Advanced	25	15	13	23	15
Number of students tested	76	74	74	53	72
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	83	79	100	73	100
% Advanced	8	5	0	0	21
Number of students tested	12	19	12	11	14
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	33		92	75	80
% Advanced	0		0	0	10
Number of students tested	12		13	12	10
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	89	93	98	97	98
% Advanced	29	19	20	19	14
Number of students tested	52	42	51	32	44
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: NJASK

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publisher: New Jersey Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	97	97	100	99	99
% Advanced	63	52	63	79	78
Number of students tested	73	77	51	66	73
Percent of total students tested	0	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	90				100
% Advanced	30				20
Number of students tested	10				10
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	90	94		93	95
% Advanced	47	31		47	38
Number of students tested	19	16		15	21
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced		100	100	90	100
% Advanced		54	50	40	20
Number of students tested		13	12	10	10
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	100	100	100	100	100
% Advanced	71	54	70	92	95
Number of students tested	41	48	33	40	39
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: NJASK

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publisher: New Jersey Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	86	90	94	97	90
% Advanced	33	33	6	20	10
Number of students tested	73	73	51	66	73
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	68	81		93	71
% Advanced	16	6		7	0
Number of students tested	19	16		15	21
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced		77	75	80	50
% Advanced		15	0	10	0
Number of students tested		13	12	10	10
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	95	92	100	98	97
% Advanced	34	25	6	27	18
Number of students tested	41	48	33	40	39
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: NJASK

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publisher: New Jersey Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	96	94	98	99	93
% Advanced	67	50	65	72	53
Number of students tested	76	54	71	68	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					70
% Advanced					30
Number of students tested					10
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	100		88	93	84
% Advanced	53		29	40	23
Number of students tested	15		17	15	31
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	77	75		91	64
% Advanced	38	8		54	29
Number of students tested	13	12		11	14
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	96	92	100		100
% Advanced	71	29	79		75
Number of students tested	48	35	42		36
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: NJASK

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publisher: New Jersey Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	92	85	90	99	88
% Advanced	22	31	20	22	18
Number of students tested	76	54	71	68	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					60
% Advanced					0
Number of students tested					10
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	93		77	93	81
% Advanced	13		12	0	3
Number of students tested	15		17	15	31
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	77	50		91	43
% Advanced	8	0		0	7
Number of students tested	13	12		11	14
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	92	92	98	100	97
% Advanced	29	29	24	35	31
Number of students tested	48	35	42	40	36
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	96	94	99	99	96
% Advanced	66	57	67	72	65
Number of students tested	224	205	195	187	219
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	84		94	93	81
% Advanced	23		8	32	26
Number of students tested	21		11	16	27
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	89	85	94	62	93
% Advanced	53	21	32	32	32
Number of students tested	46	44	36	41	66
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	91	100	100	100	96
% Advanced	50	53	53	94	71
Number of students tested	12	11	13	13	13
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	89	89	100	91	81
% Advanced	34	29	55	45	36
Number of students tested	32	33	33	33	34
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	99	99	100	100	99
% Advanced	71	57	74	81	82
Number of students tested	140	125	126	112	119
NOTES:					

11NJ3

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	88	88	94	96	92
% Advanced	27	21	13	65	14
Number of students tested	225	205	196	187	219
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	56		81		63
% Advanced	33		0		5
Number of students tested	12		11		26
2. African American Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	81	64	80	86	84
% Advanced	12	7	4	2	8
Number of students tested	46	44	37	41	66
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	75	100	94		79
% Advanced	25	92	0		10
Number of students tested	16	11	13		13
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	58	63	85	82	58
% Advanced	11	5	0	3	6
Number of students tested	33	33	23	33	34
5. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Caucasian					
% Proficient Plus % Advanced	92	92	98	98	97
% Advanced	31	24	44	27	21
Number of students tested	47	42	126	112	119
NOTES:					

11NJ3